

October 2003

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH TRAINING TO BE HELD SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH

COUNCILMEMBER ATKINS, POLICE CHIEF LANSDOWNE TO KICK OFF PROGRAM

In an effort to reduce crime and make our neighborhoods safer, Police Chief William Lansdowne and I will host a workshop on Saturday, November 8th, from 9am to noon, to assist residents in bringing Neighborhood Watch to their communities. The training will take place at the Normal Heights Community Center, 4649 Hawley Boulevard, one block south of Adams Avenue. Doors will open at 8:45am, and refreshments will be served.

Chief Lansdowne and I have pledged to work with residents to reactivate Neighborhood Watch programs as one response to growing concerns around increased crime. "During the mid 1990s, Neighborhood Watch programs sprang up in neighborhoods across the city, and in record numbers in Council District Three, with more than 200 active watches going strong by the end of the decade. I want to help get the old watch programs up and running, but also want to start up new programs in neighborhoods that haven't had active watches in the past.

When combined with Citizens Patrol as part of the police department's overall plan of neighborhood policing, Neighborhood Watch was one of the primary reasons that crime dropped steadily by the end of the 1990s. However, as crime rates dropped, many of the watch groups either disbanded or simply cut back on their activities.

I believe it's time to re-energize and reactivate our Neighborhood Watch groups in an effort to help the police department keep our crime rates at the low levels we've come to enjoy over the past 10 years. By attending this training workshop, residents will be able to go back into their communities and immediately organize a Neighborhood Watch program on their block. It's grass-roots activism at its finest.

Neighborhood Watch is a community-based program which encourages residents to keep watch over their neighbors' homes in an effort to cut down on the number of crimes in their community. It originally started in the 1960s as a way

to decrease and deter the number of burglaries occurring throughout the country.

"Neighborhood Watch programs have proven themselves time and time again," said Chief Lansdowne. "People who make the effort to alert police when there is suspicious activity make themselves, their neighbors and their communities safer. That improves the quality of life for everyone, and that's really the goal of all of us who work in local government. I'm looking forward to working with Councilmember Atkins in revitalizing Neighborhood Watch wherever it's needed in the Third District."



Councilmember Atkins and Police Chief Lansdowne announce their commitment to reactivate Neighborhood Watch throughout the district.

I look forward to working with Chief Lansdowne, the local police officers, and community members to make Neighborhood Watch a vital component in our law enforcement strategy for the district.

The Neighborhood Watch workshop is free and open to the public. To assist with the planning for the workshop, residents are asked to RSVP by Nov. 6th to my office at 619/236-6633. However, no one will be turned away on the morning of the workshop.

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COUNCIL APPROVES MISSION HILLS/ HILLCREST BRANCH LIBRARY SITE ACQUISITION

NEW 15,000 SQ. FT. FACILITY TO REPLACE IBEW BUILDING ON WASHINGTON STREET

The residents of Mission Hills and Hillcrest received some good news on Tuesday, September 30th, when the City Council unanimously approved the expenditure of \$2.2 million for the site acquisition of what will be the new Mission Hills/Hillcrest Branch Library. The new library will be built on land currently occupied by the IBEW Union building at 215 Washington Street.

I am thrilled that the city has reached an agreement to purchase this site for the new branch library that will serve the communities of Mission Hills and Hillcrest. This is the site that the community chose as the best location for the new branch library. With this step, the residents of Mission Hills and Hillcrest—who have worked so hard and waited so long—can finally be assured that we're serious about moving forward with this project.

The new branch library will replace the Mission Hills Branch Library currently located at 925 West Washington Street. Built in 1961, the 3,850 sq. ft. building is one of the smallest branch libraries in the city. At 15,000 square feet, the new branch library will be almost four times the size of the current facility, and will offer a computer lab, community meeting space, special areas designed for children and teens, and expanded general seating and collection space.

The location of the library adjacent to Florence Elementary School and the inclusion of computer labs and space for children make this project a perfect fit for area students. Once opened, this new library will quickly become a central gathering place for the residents of the surrounding communities.

Demolition of the IBEW building and the start of construction on the new building are scheduled for the fall of 2005. The new branch library is scheduled to open in October of 2007.

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COUNCILMEMBER ATKINS, DISTRICT 3 FLAGSHIP LIBRARY TASK FORCE TO HOLD COMMUNITY FORUM SAT., NOV 1

I will be joining with the District 3 Flagship Library Task Force to host a community forum to explore programming needs for the planned 25,000 square foot District Three flagship library to be located in North Park.

The forum will be held Saturday morning, November 1, from 9:00 to 11:00am, at Covenant Presbyterian Church, located at 30th Street and Howard Avenue.

The task force is looking for community input on the types of library services that should be provided at the new library, which will serve as the flagship library for the entire district. Consideration will be given to how much space should be devoted to services such as computer labs, children's reading areas, community meeting space, books, videos and music.

Community members are invited to help find a North Park site for the new District Three Flagship Library, which will replace the current branch library (shown here) at 31st Street and North Park Way.



This is a wonderful opportunity for residents to offer their opinions about what services and amenities the District Three flagship library should provide. If you like to use public libraries--as I know many of our residents do--then this is the perfect time to get involved in the planning process for this great facility. This will truly be a people-driven process, so the public really can have a profound impact on this project.

It is anticipated that site acquisition for the new library will take place in mid-2004, with design work beginning later that year. Construction is expected to begin in mid-2007 and be completed in the fall of 2008. The District 3 Flagship Library Task Force is currently considering potential locations for the library.

The public is welcome and encouraged to attend the planning forum. For more information, please contact Stephen Hill in my office at 619/236-6633.

NEW CENTRAL POLICE FACILITY APPROVED IN CITY HEIGHTS

PROJECT INCLUDES NEW 6-ACRE PARK AND OTHER COMMUNITY FACILITIES

On Tuesday, September 23rd, the City Council unanimously approved a new multi-purpose police facility to be located on a 16-acre site at the intersection of Home Avenue and Federal Boulevard in City Heights. During the council hearing, I pushed for measures to ensure that the project will also include a number of significant amenities that were requested by members of the communities surrounding the project.

These include: the purchase of an \$800,000, 6-acre park site on Home Avenue; the creation of a new, 900-square-foot community meeting room; and new pedestrian improvements on both sides of Federal Boulevard. The project is designed to complement the architecture of the existing, historical pistol range and will provide a community identification sign at the intersection of Home and Federal.

By working closely with the community, we have made this project a real asset for the surrounding neighborhoods. I see the acquisition of the 6 acres of park land as a huge step forward to improve the quality of life in a park-deficient area.

During the discussion I also insisted on a number of other measures to protect wildlife, sensitive plant species, and waterways in and around the project site. These include placing a conservation easement over 6 acres of the project site, removing non-native plants from the Auburn Branch of Chollas Creek, the replanting and monitoring of rare plant species, enhanced monitoring of water quality on the site, and close monitoring of the impacts on adjacent wildlife.

As approved, the \$8 million facility includes the relocation of existing K-9/SWAT facilities into new structures, the creation of a new vehicle maintenance facility for the Police Department, and rehabilitation of the historic pistol range buildings. The new vehicle maintenance facility will allow for the demolition of existing obsolete facilities downtown to clear the way for the city's new Central Library on that site.

COUNCILMEMBER ATKINS AND CITY ATTORNEY CASEY GWINN CO-SPONSOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MARCH AND RALLY

In an effort to raise awareness of domestic violence in San Diego, City Attorney Casey Gwinn and I co-sponsored a March on City Hall, Domestic Violence Resource Fair, and "Not To Be Forgotten" rally on October 13th.

Lending their support at the Domestic Violence Awareness Rally are (l to r) Police Chief William Lansdowne, Councilmember Atkins, City Attorney Casey Gwinn, Human Relations Commission Executive Director Ashley Walker, and Assistant Fire Chief August "Augie" Ghio.



Councilmember Atkins addresses the crowd during the Domestic Violence Awareness Rally. The rally was sponsored by Atkins and City Attorney Casey Gwinn (left).

The March on City Hall, from the Family Justice Center at 707 Broadway to the San Diego Concourse, took place during the morning of the day's events. After the march, over 30 service providers from around San Diego County contributed to a resource fair on the San Diego Concourse. At a public rally, I was given the opportunity to welcome the crowd, which included both city employees and the general public. The keynote speaker was best-selling author Joseph Wambaugh. Other speakers included State Senator Dede Alpert, County Supervisor Pam Slater, and Councilmember Donna Frye. Following the rally, I presented a City Council resolution proclaiming October to be "Domestic Violence Awareness Month" in the City of San Diego.

WATER DEPT. GOLF TOURNAMENT RAISES \$5,000 FOR BROOKLYN ELEMENTARY

I was honored to join with staff members of the City's Water Department as they presented Brooklyn Elementary School in Golden Hill with a \$5,000 check representing the funds raised as part of their annual golf tournament. Each year, the Water Department Golf Tournament Committee selects a San Diego School as the beneficiary of the tournament's proceeds, and this year we're delighted they chose Brooklyn Elementary.



Photo Gallery



(above) Councilmember Atkins and Mayor Murphy present a council resolution to departing Museum of Art director Dr. Don Bacigalupi.

(below) Councilmembers Toni Atkins (left), Ralph Inzunza (second from right) and Charles Lewis (right) present a council resolution to representatives of the Asian Pacific Islander Community AIDS Project (APICAP), honoring their 10th anniversary.



(above) Councilmember Atkins prepares to help paint the outside of the Automotive Museum in Balboa Park.



(above) Councilmember Atkins presents a special resolution proclaiming October to be "Domestic Violence Awareness Month" in the City of San Diego.

(below) Councilmember Atkins and Councilmember Scott Peters present a council resolution to San Diego LGBT Community Center Development Director Shawn Ingram proclaiming October 5, 2003, to be "AIDS Walk San Diego Day" in San Diego.



Chief Lansdowne (above) and Councilmember Atkins (below) address a crowd of more than 100 residents who came out to meet the new police chief at a gathering sponsored by the Councilmember at Rosa Parks Elementary School in City Heights.



(above and below) District Three residents take time to meet with Chief Lansdowne one-on-one at a Community Meet-and-Greet hosted by Councilmember Atkins.

